

Evolving Training Techniques & Practices: The Story of *Consult Right*

Training new consultants to work in the writing center can be a daunting process for both the director and the consultants themselves. Most traditional training methods require extensive organization and record-keeping, which becomes even more complicated as new consultants are hired throughout the course of the year. Because of this, many consultants receive inconsistent training experiences, resulting in unequal preparation and potential frustration on behalf of everyone involved. Combining traditional and technology-orientated techniques along with mentorship pairings is a promising concept for consultant training. This approach is adaptable for any writing center and blends different learning styles and teaching techniques to promote experiential learning in a collaborative environment.

In the past, the Oakland University Writing Center (OUWC) utilized printed training modules for new consultants, which were completed along with observations and co-tutoring sessions with experienced consultants. Some consultants also completed a Peer Tutoring in Composition course designed to supplement training received at the center. However, we began to receive fewer applicants from this course, which left a gap in other applicants' theoretical and pedagogical exposure. To improve the consultant training process, we have created our *Consult Right* training program. This training includes more aspects of collaboration that would have been gained within the classroom. Trainees are asked to read and annotate articles, watch mock sessions videos, complete interactive modules, move through citation assessments, participate in observations, and complete co-tutoring sessions. Allowing consultants to view each other's approaches to certain scenarios enables them to broaden their own skill set.

Consult Right not only provides initial consultant training, but also encourages continuous growth within all consultants. To demonstrate the effectiveness of the reformed training system, we have conducted assessments and collected surveys throughout consultants' progress in the program. This presentation will bring together our Operations Coordinator, a Consultant Mentor, and a graduate Writing Consultant in order to represent and explore the different stages of our program's evolution. We hope that in sharing our experiences in consultant training, other writing centers can reflect upon their own training techniques.